

# State Senator • Irma Clark-Coleman

*Serving the 3rd District Constituents in Detroit, Dearborn & River Rouge*

## Detroit School Layoffs Reflect Budget Crisis

The imminent layoff of 3,200 Detroit Public Schools' employees, which includes 900 teachers, is symptomatic of the overall budget problem facing our state. General revenues just aren't there and some members of the legislature are willing to cut from the education budget to fill the gap.

Lawmakers have proposed reductions that take away from the education of all of our children. For instance, \$10 million was cut statewide from "at-risk" programs that functioned as after-school activities, tutoring, and lunch and breakfast offerings.

The neediest among us are bearing the burden for the whole.

Sen. Irma Clark-Coleman believes that the funding cuts, along with the teacher layoffs, will cause overcrowded classrooms, less individual student-to-teacher interaction,

and more of our children to fall through the cracks. She proposed legislation (SB 60) that would limit the number of students in K-3 classes to 17. That bill is still waiting to be heard. Nevertheless, Sen. Clark-Coleman and her Senate Democratic colleagues vehemently fought to restore the \$10 million in cuts as well as the \$15 million in funding for the Detroit Public Schools promised as a result of the state takeover.

As the budget process continues, we will persevere in our fight for our children to receive an equal education.



## Clark-Coleman Brings Assisted Living Complex to Detroit

Sen. Clark-Coleman was instrumental in establishing Detroit's first senior assisted living complex for low-income residents. Scheduled to open this summer on the city's eastside, the complex will offer apartment housing complete with daily meals,

housekeeping, laundry/linen service, scheduled transportation, 24-hour in-house staff, emergency pull cords, and recreational/cultural/social activities.

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# A Note From Senator Irma Clark-Coleman



*Dear Constituent:*

*As we quickly approach summer break, I wish you and your families safe travel and an enjoyable time together. As I look forward to spending more time with my own family as well as with all of you at various activities within the District, my attention focuses on the budget and how decisions that are being made now will impact our everyday lives.*

*Currently, we are about half-way through the budget-setting process. Proposed cuts to our schools, and social & health programs are troubling, but there is hope on the horizon. I believe that, under the leadership of Governor Jennifer M. Granholm, we can pass a budget that is both fiscally responsible and protective of the programs we value most.*

*Our success will be based on a collective resolve to more closely manage our personal budgets and to become more politically active. You must pay closer attention to those who create and administer laws at both the local and state levels.*

*Please use the information on the front of this newsletter to contact my office with any concerns that you may have. You have chosen me to serve you and I am at your service. I look forward to hearing from you.*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Irma Clark-Coleman".

**Irma Clark-Coleman**  
State Senator • 3rd District

## Help Refuel Metro Detroit's Blood Supply

**T**he American Red Cross needs our help. Metro Detroit's blood supply is low and needs replenishing. Current reserves equate to about three days' worth of critical blood types (Type O and Type B). Acceptable levels should stock a five- to seven-day supply, according to the Red Cross.

Type O is universal; everyone can use it. Type B is more prevalent among African Americans and many other ethnic groups, including Middle Easterners, Italians, and Ukrainians. Keeping safe blood inventory levels is crucial to community preparedness.

Let's keep Metro-Detroit ready by donating blood at local Red Cross Donor Centers.

Two local centers are:

**Dearborn**

Village Plaza  
23400 Michigan Avenue  
Tuesday - Thursday  
1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**NEW LOCATION!**

**Detroit**

7910 W. Outer Drive  
Thursday, 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

### Top 10 Reasons to Donate Blood

1. It's easy and convenient.
2. You get free juice and cookies.
3. You will weigh less – one pint less! Your body will replenish what you donate.
4. It's something you can spare.
5. You don't have to do any heavy lifting as long as you wear the bandage.
6. You will walk a little taller afterwards.
7. Your donation will help ensure that blood is there when someone needs it.
8. It's something you can do that the rich and famous do.
9. You will be someone's hero.
10. It's the right thing to do.

## State Police Bolster Community Security

**S**en. Clark-Coleman recently announced that the Michigan State Police and the Michigan Community Service Commission awarded Detroit Citizens Corps., a community security group, a \$40,000 grant to train ordinary citizens to respond to local emergencies and disasters.

"This grant puts the power and will of people to work for the greater community," she said in her announcement. "I commend the State Police and the Community Service Commission on their efforts to prepare us for unforeseen emergencies."

The Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) program trains first responders (fire, police, and emergency management professionals) who then instruct community members. Areas of preparation include basic lifesaving, light rescue, light fire fighting, triage, and basic first aid.

# Governor Appoints Senator Clark-Coleman to Guide Nation’s Education Policy

Gov. Granholm recently appointed Sen. Clark-Coleman to the Education Commission of the States. She is the sole legislative gubernatorial appointee.

In naming the Senator, Gov. Granholm said, “Michigan will be well-served by Senator Irma Clark-Coleman’s appointment to the National Education Commission.” She continued, “Senator Clark-Coleman’s leadership on education issues in Michigan and her background as a school board member gives her great insight into the work that is needed to

make our schools world class places of learning.” The Commission will bridge the gap between good ideas and effective education policy. Part of its responsibilities includes designing communications strategies that will strengthen public understanding of each state’s education improvement goals. Commissioners are also entrusted with promoting relationships between

state policymakers and the education community at both the state and local levels.



Senator Clark-Coleman poses with Governor Jennifer M. Granholm at the swearing-in ceremony.

## Senator Clark-Coleman’s Legislation (partial listing)

### Senate Resolution

#### SR 201

Urges the Congress of the United States to amend the USA PATRIOT Act to ensure national security without eroding civil liberties.

### Senate Bills

#### SB 632

Requires auto insurers to provide written explanations to policyholders when their insurance is cancelled at the time of renewal.

#### SB 638

Permits students enrolled in theology, divinity, or religious education programs to receive state scholarships and grant monies.



#### SB 729-732

Bill package that moves MEAP administration back to the Department of Education from the Department of the Treasury. Gov. Granholm did so by an Executive Order.

#### SB 976

Prohibits electric utility suppliers from shutting off the utilities of senior citizens, during the heating season, who are enrolled in a heating assistance program.

## Home Foreclosures Averted With Information

Responding to Wayne County’s efforts to repossess occupied homes for delinquent taxes, Sen. Clark-Coleman sent a letter to residents in District 3 whose names appeared on the list. People in Detroit, Dearborn, and River Rouge were positioned to lose their homes, in some cases, for as little as \$200.

Sen. Clark-Coleman’s letter informed residents that their homes were due to be foreclosed and listed available hotline phone numbers. Some homeowners contacted the

county and settled the issues surrounding their non-payments. In other cases, officials had reassessed properties without the owners’ knowledge, causing tax payments to increase. As a result, homeowners fell delinquent because of unpaid taxes.

Last year, more than 2,900 properties were sold at the county auction. If you or someone you know faces this problem, contact the Wayne County Property Tax Hotline at 313-224-5990 or the Legal Aid & Defender Association at 877-964-4700, ext. 6467.

City	# of Homes on Foreclosure List
Detroit	449
Dearborn	21
River Rouge	29





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# Update on Local School Board Control

**T**uesday, November 2, is still the date on which Detroiters will vote to determine whether their local school district will be governed by elected or appointed leaders. The state-mandated restructuring of Detroit’s school system encountered great skepticism and little support when it was imposed in 1999. Since that time, public opinion has remained unchanged.

Under the state-led reform, legislation allowed the free-will choice of city residents to be replaced by an appointed school board. This rule was set to reign for five years at which time the people of Detroit would choose to remain with the appointed board or return to the popular vote.

As Election Day draws closer, Sen. Clark-Coleman, and other State Senators representing Detroit, continue to stand against

any proposal that would deny the public vote while giving a controlling interest to legislative and other political leaders.

Among the proposals rejected by Sen. Clark-Coleman and her Detroit colleagues was one that called for a special election in March to determine the School District’s governing system. This proposition would have established a low-voter turnout, Sen. Clark-Coleman stated in several interviews. Research shows that special elections traditionally attract 1 out of 10 voters. Scheduling the vote during a general election promotes a larger voter turnout, reports prove.

Currently, there is pending legislation in the Senate concerning the governance of Detroit Public Schools. Sen. Clark-Coleman will give updates as information becomes available.

# Assisted Living Complex

*Continued from front page*

Prior to this development, communities of this type were mostly known to exist in the Metro-Detroit area and not within city limits. Sen. Clark-Coleman joined forces with the Detroit Area Agency on Aging and one of the foremost assisted living housing developers in the region to bring dignity and luxury to Detroit’s low-income, elderly population.

The new facility will accept residents who receive Medicaid waivers (MI Choice) and federal housing assistance. Monthly rent will be based upon a resident’s monthly income.

Sen. Clark-Coleman and local officials who worked to make this happen for Detroit’s deserving seniors wanted to stop the flow of retirees to neighboring suburbs and to provide desirable housing for these residents near their families and friends.



*Sen. Clark-Coleman (far right) joins Gov. Granholm, Insurance Commissioner Linda Watters (2nd from right), and other state legislators as they announce proposed rule changes to prohibit insurers from using credit scores to determine personal insurance rates.*